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ABSTRACT

A 16-item questionnaire was used to survey 60 college and university presidents and 61 board chairmen in six Middle Atlantic states in order to explore distinctions between the policy and the administration functions in the president-trustee relationship. Personal intrviews were conducted with ten of the chairmen and ten presidents as a followup to the questionnaire. Respondents in both survey and interviews disagreed on a number of the issues as to whether they are policy or administration functions. For example, 65 percent of the trustees labeled the board's engagement of a consultant to review institutional direction as a policy issue, the same percentage described the elimination of a department as administrative. Presidents divided almost evenly on both these matters. In addition, many respondents were inconsistent within their own responses. The survey demonstrates the difficulty inherent in using the policy-administration distinction to clarify or explain the president-trustee relationship. The issues are so interrelated that it is difficult to divide responsibility on this basis. Rather, personal relationships emerge as the most important aspect of the relationship. Consequently, an evaluation of the relationship should include the ability of the chairman and the president to work cooperatively in fulfilling their respective responsibilities in governance. The trustee-presidential relations survey questions are appended. (Author/MSE)

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POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

IN THE GOVERNANCE

OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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A B S T R A C T

The author conducted a sixteen-item questionnaire survey of sixty college and university presidents and sixty-one board chairmen in six Middle Atlantic states in order to explore the policy-administration distinction in the trustee-president relationship. Personal interviews were conducted with ten of the chairmen and ten presidents as a follow-up to the questionnaire survey. The respondents (in both the survey and the interviews) disagreed on a number of the sixteen issues as to what "policy" is and what "administration" is. In addition, many respondents were inconsistent on this dimension in their overall response patterns.

This survey demonstrates the difficulty in attempting to utilize the policy-administration distinction to clarify the trustee-president relationship. The matters on which policy and administration are interrelated are so complicated that it is very difficult to divide responsibility on this basis. Rather, personal relations emerge in the survey as the most important aspect of the trustee-president relationship. Consequently, specific conclusions about the policy-administration dimension of the trustee-president relationship must be set in a framework that includes an assessment of the ability of the board chairman and the president to work cooperatively as they fulfill their respective responsibilities in the governance of the institution.

POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE GOVERNANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

The policy-administration dichotomy is alive if not well in the governance and management of institutions of higher education. An examination of the accepted understandings concerning the meaning of "policy" and of "administration" among college and university presidents and chairmen of boards of trustees results in an interesting portrait. There is widespread agreement that these two categories exist as separate functions and, furthermore, that the major responsibility for policy belongs to the board while the main responsibility for administration is the president's. But there is significant disagreement on the application of these concepts to specific situations.

A workable relationship between trustees and the president is crucial to viable decisionmaking in institutions of higher education. Tight budgets, the enrollment crunch, and increased demands for accountability all intensify the necessity for difficult choices on diverse matters affecting colleges and universities. The specific locus of such decisions, however, is often undefined and the subject of significant disagreement between trustees and college administrators. Some presidents automatically forward controversial issues to boards of trustees for decision without adequate information or consultation when board members do not believe that this is proper, while other

chief executives make decisions on matters their trustees feel should be presented to them. The resulting disagreements and misunderstandings can lead to a relationship in which little gets done until personnel changes are made in an attempt to start anew. But this solution often proves to be no solution at all, for the underlying policy-administration issue is frequently not addressed on such occasions.

In order to explore the complexities of the trustee-president authority relationship, the author surveyed sixty college and university presidents and sixty-one board chairmen in six Middle Atlantic states on their relations with their opposite numbers.[1] The purpose of the study was to clarify the nature of the authority relationship through the isolation of major points of disagreement between trustees and presidents, points of disagreement which could then be narrowed by reasoned discussion and analysis in the light of generally made distinctions between policy and administration. In pursuit of this objective, the respondents to the survey were asked to indicate who they felt should take action on each of sixteen specific issues considered to be of some importance to institutions of higher education. They were also requested to specify whether they considered each of the items to be a policy issue or administrative in nature.

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[1] Robert E. Cleary, "Trustee-President Authority Relations," Educational Record, 60 (Spring, 1979), pp. 146-158.

In determining their responses, the recipients were asked to keep in mind the presumption that the board of trustees determines policy while the president has responsibility for the administration and management of the institution and for the execution of policies set forth by the trustees. (See the appendix for the survey questionnaire.)

The Literature in the Field

An examination of institutional bylaws and of the literature in higher education administration indicates that insufficient attention is paid by practitioners and scholars to the question of policy and administration. The usual statement on this subject turns out to be little more than a comment that the board makes policy decisions while the president administers the institution and implements board policies. Little is usually said, though, about how this generalization is to be applied in specific situations, with guidelines that offer direction for presidents and trustees who are attempting to resolve particular issues being hard to find.

Typical institutional bylaws include the following statements:

> "The Board of Trustees shall constitute the governing body of [the College] and engage in the policy direction of the College in accord with the terms of the Charter of Incorporation." (small private college in the Northeast)
>
> "The Board. . . shall generally direct the affairs of the University. . . ." (large public institution in the South)

> "The Board shall formulate University policy but under its general supervision it shall leave the execution of these policies to the President and the administrative and faculty agents as provided in these Bylaws and Regulations. . . .
>
> "The President shall be the executive head of the University in all its departments, and to him is committed the general supervision of all its interests, and he may act with freedom within the lines of general policy approved by the Board." (large public institution in the Midwest)
>
> "The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation. He shall be responsible for carrying out the policies of the corporation as determined by the Board of Trustees." (small private college in New England)

The relevant phraseology in the Model Bylaws for Independent Colleges promulgated by the Association of Governing Boards is more specific in defining the president's role than are most of the above statements, but it is still general. The Model Bylaws declare that:

> "The President of the College shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the College and the official adviser to the executive agent of the Board of Trustees and its Executive Committee. He shall, as educational and administrative head of the College, exercise a general superintendence over all affairs of the institution, and bring such matters to the attention of the Board as are appropriate to keep the Board fully informed to meet its policy-making responsibilities. He shall have power, on behalf of the Trustees, to perform all acts and execute all documents to make effective the actions of the Board or its Executive Committee."[2]

The academic literature on this subject is not much more precise. John Corson, in an article entitled

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[2]Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, "Model Bylaws for Independent Colleges," revised ed. (Washington: AGB, 1978), p. 6. (Mimeographed.)

"Trusteeship, 1977 Style," writes that "the Board gives direction to the institution--including the academic program, but it doesn't attempt to run the institution. It should evaluate the president periodically, but allow him to run the university."[3] In his book on The Governance of Colleges and Universities, Corson states that while the president should consult widely, he "...as the chief executive officer, subject to the policies set by the trustees and the advice offered by...advisory bodies, should be free at all times to act."[4]

Clifton Wharton, in an article on "The Stewardship of Trustees and the President," makes a distinction between policy decisions and policy execution in writing that "trustees and presidents share one major characteristic: they are the only individuals with a total institutional perspective. In terms of policy determination, only the board has both the necessary authority and the institution-wide perspective. In terms of policy formulation and its execution, only the president has a similar institution-wide perspective and competency."[5]

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[3]John J. Corson, "Trusteeship, 1977 Style," AGB Reports, 19(January/February, 1977), p. 4.

[4]John J. Corson, The Governance of Colleges and Universities, revised ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975), p. 262.

[5]Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., "The Stewardship of Trustees and the President," AGB Reports, 16 (September, 1973), p. 18.

Myron Wicke, in his Handbook for Trustees, makes a similar point when he declares: "The board of trustees is a legislative, not an executive body, whose primary responsibility is the determination of policy. This means most importantly that the board's function is not administrative.... Execution of policy must be scrupulously left in the hands of the president." But having laid down the principle, Wicke goes on to point out that "the distinction between policy-making and execution on college campuses once seemed much simpler than it does today."[6]

While helpful, comments like these do not provide substantive guidelines on differences between policy and administration or give much guidance for trustees or administrators acting on controversial subjects. What should be done when it is time to construct an austerity budget for a college or university? Who should participate in such budget construction? If it is assumed that this question concerns policy matters, at what stages should the trustees be involved? And what about another subject, such as long-range planning? At which point should the trustees participate in this task? And who should hire a financial consultant? And on, and on, and on....

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[6]Myron F. Wicke, Handbook for Trustees, revised ed. (Nashville: The United Methodist Church Board of Education, 1969), p. 12.

These are extremely difficult queries to answer. The 1979 Touche Ross survey of business executives serving on boards of educational institutions found that 79 percent of 105 respondents felt their primary function as trustees lay in setting policy.[7] But a 1977 survey by S. L. Drake of 435 presidents and 333 chairmen at 545 public community colleges found that two-thirds of each group saw their boards as spending considerable time on "involvement with internal administrative matters." In a revealing finding, the responding chairmen felt this involvement was legitimate, but only 12 percent of the presidents agreed.[8]

In the final analysis, it is relatively simple to declare that "policy" is set by the board with responsibility for its administration being centered in the office of the president, but it is not as easy to specify what "policy" is and what "administration" is. The kind of statement that is usually made on this matter, though, lies in a tradition that existed for many years in political science and in business administration. In business, a typical formulation can be found in Dawson and Mounce's Business Law, as follows:

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[7]Research and Forecasts, Inc., "The Touche Ross Survey of Business Executives on Non-Profit Boards" (New York: Research and Forecasts, Inc., 1979), p. 34 (Mimeographed.)

[8]S. L. Drake, "A Study of Community and Junior College Boards of Trustees" (Washington: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1977). (Mimeographed).

> "The management and control of the ordinary and usual business of a corporation is vested in its board of directors, generally by express provision of the corporation statute. While the board, as such, does not handle the day-to-day activities of the corporation, it does, within the scope of its authority, determine basic policies which control those activities. It is essentially a policy-determining body....
>
> "The day-to-day activities of the business of a corporation are carried on by the officers of the corporation.... [T]he board of directors delegate...to the various officers of the corporation the power and authority to carry on the day-to-day work of the corporation. The board may not, however, delegate to the officers of the corporation any of its policy-determining functions....
>
> "While actually many of the policies adopted by the board of directors of a corporation originate with the officers, they do not become binding upon the corporation unless they first receive the stamp of approval of the board of directors."[9]

Similar distinctions prevailed for years in political science and public administration. Frank Goodnow wrote in 1900, for example, "that there are two distinct functions of government and...their differentiation results in a differentiation, though less complete, of the organs of government provided by the formal governmental system. These two functions of government may for purposes of convenience be designated respectively as Politics and Administration. Politics has to do with policies or expressions of the state will. Administration has to do with the execution of these policies."[10]

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[9]Townes L. Dawson and Earl W. Mounce, Business Law:Text and Cases, 3rd ed. (Lexington, Mass.:D.C. Heath, 1975), pp. 1034-1035.

[10]Frank J. Goodnow, Politics and Administration (New York: Macmillan, 1900), p. 18.

Luther Gulick developed the Goodnow argument a further step when he wrote in Papers on the Science of Administration in 1937 that efficient government requires the separation of politics from administration, and the combination of these functions produces inefficiency.[11] But neither Gulick nor Goodnow nor anyone else has suggested clear criteria to distinguish a policy question from an administrative one.

In fact, most current students of political science and public administration argue that policy and administration are intertwined rather than separate. Gulick recognized this when he wrote that "we are in the end compelled to mitigate the pure concept of efficiency in the light of the value scale of politics and the social order."[12] Paul Appleby carried this perspective to a conclusion when he argued in Policy and Administration in 1949 that administration, given the kinds of decisions it often entails, is in itself frequently just as political a process as is policy-making.[13]

It is extremely difficult to separate the decisional component from the implementation component of controversial questions. Consequently, specific suggestions as to how to deal with the policy-administration interrelationship are

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[11] Luther Gulick," Science, Values and Public Administration," eds. Luther Gulick and L. Urwick, Papers on the Science of Administration, (New York: Institute of Public Administration, 1937), p. 191.

[12] Ibid., p. 193.

[13] Paul H. Appleby, Policy and Administration (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1949).

exceptions rather than the rule in the literature on the government of higher education. The result of this situation is that discussion and even argument on the role of administrative versus trustee decision-making tends to be more common in institutions of higher education than those involved would prefer.

Findings of the Study

Trustees and presidents queried in the author's study tended to agree on their answers as to who has the responsibility to take action on just over half the sixteen items on the questionnaire. They disagreed, sometimes sharply, on the remaining matters. They differed substantially as to whether the president or the board should act on such social questions as the establishment of dormitory regulations and the authorization of the distribution of birth control devices on campus, on the financial issue of an institutional budget review and audit, and on the academic and administrative questions involved in the appointment of a dean when the appointment is controversial in the faculty.[9] Respondents also agreed as to the classification of the survey items as policy or administrative on slightly more than half the items in the study. But the responses on seven of the sixteen questions indicate that many presidents and trustees have conflicting opinions about whether these matters involve major policy issues. One item, whether the board should conduct a separate budget review and audit

(question #10), produced a virtually even split within each group. Fifty-two percent of the trustees and 49 percent of the presidents saw this issue as policy, while the others termed it administrative. Sixty-six percent of the presidents indicated that the question of board involvement in the preliminary stages of the budget process (#9) is an administrative matter, whereas 47 percent of the trustees classified it as policy. Sixty-five percent of the trustees labeled the board's engagement of an outside consultant to review institutional direction (#11) as policy, with the same percentage declaring the elimination of an academic department (#15) to be administrative. Presidents divided almost evenly on both these matters. In addition, question #4, the presidential authorization of the distribution of birth control devices on campus without board approval, was termed policy by 64 percent of the trustees; but only 35 percent of the chief executives viewed this as a policy issue.

Significant majorities of both sets of respondents termed two other items policy issues, but sizable minorities disagreed in each case. Seventy percent of the trustees and 62 percent of the presidents indicated that the development of institutional goals by the board (#12) is a policy issue. Fifty-eight percent of the trustees and 59 percent of the presidents also answered that the establishment of faculty tenure limits by the board (#14) is policy. But over 30 percent of the responding trustees and presidents declared that the

development of goals is an administrative decision and over 40 percent responded that the tenure question is administrative in nature. Board chairmen and president thus disagreed broadly on a variety of issues as to what is policy and what is administration.

It should be noted here that the nature of the institution affects the findings of this survey. Speaking generally, the president is likely to assert a stronger decision-making role as well as to declare more items to be administrative in nature and, therefore, seemingly his or her responsibility in large private institutions, especially those with bigger boards. A more significant policy role is likely to be claimed by the trustees in smaller public institutions, particularly those with small boards.[14]

Finally, a comparison of the survey responses on who should act on a particular issue with the responses of whether the item is considered policy or administrative in nature produces interesting results. Presumably, a respondent indicating that the board should act on an issue would also indicate that the matter is policy, given the usual understanding -- summarized in the cover letter attached to the author's questionnaire -- that the board determine policy while the president executes it.

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[14] See Robert E. Cleary, "The Board Chairman, the President, and College and University Governance," AGB Reports, forthcoming.

While the response patterns of board chairmen and chief executives differed on certain specific questions when the two major aspects of each questionnaire answer are combined, each group supported presidential action on campus problems about the same number of times. Trustee support for board action was slightly greater (6.7%) than presidential support for board action. Perhaps more important than either of these findings, though, was the fact that respondents categorizing survey items as policy or as administration were inconsistent 26.8% of the time when their responses are compared with their answers on whether the president or the board should act in a particular situation. Trustees were inconsistent on 170 of 736 such comparisons (23.1%), while presidents were inconsistent on 232 of 765 (30.3%). Overall, then, chairmen and presidents responded inconsistently more than one-quarter of the time when the two major components of their answers are compared to each other. (See Table I.) This result demonstrates the difficulty involved in attempting to clarify the board chairman-president relationship through the application of general distinctions between policy and administration.

Chairmen and Presidents Comment on Policy and Administration

Interviews conducted by the author with ten board chairmen and ten presidents as a follow-up to the questionnaire survey indicate that the findings summarized in the preceding section are overshadowed in importance by the nature of the personal relationship between a chairman and a president.

TABLE I

PRESIDENTIAL V. TRUSTEE ACTION
VIEWED IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE POLICY-ADMINISTRATION DISTINCTION[1]

	Consistent Presidential Support Responses[2]	Consistent Board Support Responses[3]	Inconsistent Responses: Board Action, but an Administrative Matter[4]	Inconsistent Responses: Presidential Action, but a Policy Issue[4]
Presidential Responses:	365 - 47.7%	168 - 22.0%	57 - 7.4%	175 - 22.9%
Board Responses:	355 - 48.2%	211 - 28.7%	44 - 6.0%	126 - 17.1%

[1]The figures presented in this table are aggregates of the individual presidential or trustee responses to the sixteen items on the survey questionnaire. Not all respondents completed every item. The sixty presidential respondents completed both the "who should take action" sub-question -- the president or the board -- as well as the policy-administration sub-question on the various items a total of 765 times. The sixty-one trustees did so a total of 736 times.

[2]Consistent presidential support responses are those which declare that presidents should take action on a question as well as that the matter is administrative in nature.

[3]Consistent board support responses are those which declare that boards should take action as well as that the matter is a policy issue.

[4]Inconsistent responses are of two kinds: the board should act but the matter is administrative in nature (column 3), or the president should act but the matter is a policy question (column 4). Comments appended by respondents to their answers indicate that the leading reason for the sizable inconsistency reported in column 4 is a belief or "policy" that the president should deal with certain types of issues. Hence these respondents were using the word "policy" in a different sense than the idea that the board determines policy while the president executes it, the meaning of the term utilized in the questionnaire.

As the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges pamphlet entitled The Board Chairperson and the President asserts, "the two leaders should have a successful and even... a congenial relationship....Compatibility isn't easy to define, but perhaps the most important ingredients for any kind of successful partnership are good faith and good communication between the partners."[15] A positive relationship between the chief executive and the board chairman based on mutual trust and respect, a shared understanding of what they are attempting to accomplish, and how they are doing it is essential to maximum institutional progress.

Many survey respondents appended comments about the importance of a good relationship to their completed questionnaires. The board chairman of a small private institution with a large board declared that a "close working relationship involving a joint effort on the part of the board and the president" is necessary to resolve many of the kinds of issues presented on the questionnaire. The chairman of a large public institution with a small board wrote that "previous decisions, the community setting, and the relationship between the president and the board govern the resolution [of certain of these issues]." The president of a small private college with a relatively large board emphasized the importance of teamwork in dealing with the items covered in the study.

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[15] Joseph C. Gies and Wayne Anderson, The Board Chairperson and the President (Washington: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1977), pp. 7 and 11.

Beyond this, the interviewees were virtually unanimous in agreeing that informal and personal relationship factors are much more important in a good board-president interaction than any structural or institutional characteristics. Most interviewees specified the personal relationship between the president and the board chairman as being the single most important factor in this interaction. Comments like "the personal relationship between the president and the chairman is crucial," "an enormous amount depends on the personal relationship between the president and the chairman and the rest of the board," and "the president and the chairman must have mutual respect for one another and one another's roles" pervaded the interviews.

Virtually every president and chairman interviewed also argued that a positive board-presidential relationship rests on trustee understanding of the involved and complex nature of the policy-administration dimension of this relationship. Those responsible for the leadership of the institution must recognize the complications underlying their task. Certain issues involve <u>both</u> policy and administration, and it is very difficult to sort them out. The question of creating a new department or program is usually considered policy, for example, but the staffing and organization of the unit would be administrative in nature. A budget decision may be routine administratively, but at the same time it might implicitly include a policy commitment to a new program.

Policy issues can differ from campus to campus. The president of a small church-related college declared that birth control is a policy matter, but the board chairman of a large urban university that includes a teaching hospital asserted it is administrative.

The size of the problem can make a difference as to whether a matter is deemed policy or administration. Thus one chairman felt a large budget deficit would present a policy problem, whereas a small one would not.

Policy can get set beyond the confines of the campus. Increasingly, state boards or other outside control agencies are making policy decisions on budget or on faculty relations in public institutions. This situation diminishes the autonomous policy role of the institutional board and increases its potential for participating in campus administrative decisions as it attempts to find a meaningful role in college or university affairs.

Virtually all interviewees declared that when doubt exists as to what is policy and what is administration, it is up to the president to take the lead in sorting out the probable policy decisions for the attention of the trustees. As one chief executive declared, "The president must respect the board's policy role and act to safeguard it or eventually lose the trustees' confidence." If the president is in doubt as to whether an item is considered policy, he or she is best advised to check with the board chairman and/or the appropriate committee chairman.

James G. Paltridge and his colleagues have argued that it would be helpful if distinctions were to be made among types of institutional policy by level.[16] Without question, boards need to be involved in legislative policy, dealing with purposes and goals. It is less clear as to whether they should be involved in management policy, dealing with broad interpretations of legislative policy and general guidelines for its implementation. Most analysts would argue that trustees should not be involved with working policy, specific administrative rules and regulations to implement the above. It is the president's obligation, though, to point out possible policy decisions sufficiently important for the board's attention and to protect the trustees' role on these decisions. Some presidents do this in a formal way: they label the putative policy issues on a matter going to the trustees, then note what seems to be procedural and administrative. This gives the chief executive the opportunity to emphasize roles and functions in a cooperative way with the board.

A competent president who safeguards the policy responsibilities of the board is likely to ease the possibilities of destructive dipping into administration on the part of trustees who feel their policy role is too limited, through the engendering of respect for his or

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[16] James G. Paltridge et al., Boards of Trustees: Their Decision Patterns (Berkeley: Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, University of California, 1973), pp. 34-39.

her position as the chief executive officer of the institution. Trustees must understand that while the board has ultimate authority to supervise institutional affairs, they cannot perform day-to-day operational tasks. Trustees must be constantly informed, but they should not attempt to make operating judgments without good cause and full information. This is particularly true of individual board members. They should be knowledgeable about campus problems, but they should not try to resolve them unilaterally. Questions which might be brought directly to board members for resolution can be referred to the proper committee or administrator for study and report. But one way or another, they should be dealt with through established channels in order to minimize the dangers of procedural confusion and to protect administrative prerogatives.

As B. Herbert Brown, former chairman of the board of regents of the University of Maryland, has written: "The Regents, individually and collectively, must refrain from administrating and interfering with the administration. ...We lack competence on the University pedagogic, administrative, research and service levels.... Conversely, the administration must refrain from encroaching on the policy making prerogatives of the Board of Regents."[17] Several years ago Time magazine quoted former Secretary of State

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[17]B. Herbert Brown, " The Role of the Board" statement at new members information meeting, July 22, 1976, p. 4. (Mimeographed.)

Dean Acheson as putting the basic point a bit more simply when he was a member of the Yale Corporation: "We don't interfere with the running of the college. This would be the quickest way to louse things up!"[18]

Efforts by individual students, faculty, or other individuals or client groups to deal directly with the board or a board member to accomplish a particular purpose are inevitable from time to time. Such "end runs" around presidential and administrative authority are precedent-setting and destructive of proper administrative procedures. But they are difficult for a president to control, particularly if the chief executive is not protecting trustee prerogatives and responsibilities in policy determination. As one board chairman declared, trustees are more likely to get into administrative matters when they have little or no confidence in the chief executive's willingness or ability to safeguard their policy-making role and to work cooperatively with them. This chairman commented as follows: "The board can only set policy and remain confident that it will be carried out when there is an open working relationship with the president. Boards become involved in administration when confidence has been lost in the president."

Confidence in the president on the part of the board tends both to result from and to lead to a good working

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[18] Time, June 28, 1964, p. 59.

relationship. The key to a viable resolution of the problems inherent in the policy-administration distinction is likely to lie in such a relationship, rather than in attempts to separate policy issues from administrative matters.

The time clearly has come to drop the recurring efforts to make sharp role distinctions between trustees and presidents on the basis of differences between policy and administration. These distinctions can look good on paper, but they tend to be inappropriate in reality because of the confusion surrounding their application. As Maxwell King and Robert Breuder write: "The long-standing stereotype position on board-president duties and relationships where a wall divides the responsibilities of each must be rejected. Boards and presidents alike must recognize the existence of overlapping responsibilities in such critical areas as policy formulation and institutional administration."[19]

John Corson declares in The Governance of Colleges and Universities that "the administration of colleges and universities is a continuum in which trustees, presidents, deans, department chairpersons, faculty members, and students within and the alumni, professional groups and

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[19]Maxwell C. King and Robert L. Breuder, President-Trustee Relationships: Meeting the Challenge of Leadership (Washington: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1977), pp. 52-53.

governmental authorities without have interrelated and mutually responsible parts to play."[20]

Myron Wicke suggests that we heed the advice of former President Henry Wriston of Brown University on how presidents should conceive their role under these circumstances, as follows: "Proposals ought to be advanced with a view to obtaining consensus. They should be reshaped or modified until a consensus is in sight, or abandoned if compromise has ruined their substance."[21]

The development of viable trustee-president relations clearly depends in large part on an understanding by the president and the trustees of the reciprocal and interlocking nature of their responsibilities. A president who safeguards the board's prerogatives while performing his or her duties in a competent manner is likely to find the board following procedures, processes, and traditions that will protect the authority of the chief executive.

In interviews, presidents and board chairmen emphasized the importance of educating trustees on the complicated nature of the policy-administration issue and its dimensions and implications. This might be done by experienced trustees talking with new trustees, perhaps informally, or perhaps as part of a formal orientation procedure run by the institution,

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[20]Corson, The Governance of Colleges and Universities, p. 236.

[21]Wicke, p. 29.

either directly or through the Association of Governing Boards. But all the education in the world will not help if the president does not inspire confidence by accomplishing tasks and goals in the interests of the institution as envisaged by the board. The president must be seen as a person who is working with the board to protect its role while advancing institutional purposes.

Conclusions

The results of this survey indicate that the perceptions of board chairmen and presidents as to what policy is and what administration is coincide slightly more often than they differ. When disagreements do occur, there are no definitive answers as to what should be done. The institution's bylaws are likely to be of minimal assistance in outlining procedures for dealing with issues involving the policy-administration distinction. The matters on which policy and administration are intertwined tend to be complicated enough to make attempts to achieve an exact division of responsibility a rather fruitless exercise.

Nevertheless, efforts to develop a general understanding of the problems involved in the policy-administration dichotomy are of significant assistance to university leaders who are attempting to improve their working arrangements. The classification of policy issues into levels of legislative policy, management policy, and working policy should aid in this endeavor. The labeling of the major policy matters implicit in a campus issue being presented to the board, at

the same time noting what seems to be procedural and administrative, should also assist. Educational orientation sessions for trustees on their obligations and responsibilities should be of help too.

But as the AGB's pamphlet on The Board Chairperson and the President notes in its first paragraph, quoting President George Rainsford of Kalamazoo College: "While the president may be responsible for the management of the institution, the president and board chairperson are jointly responsible for the leadership of the institution."[22] "As such," King and Breuder write, "it is their duty to work cooperatively, effecting decisions in the best interests of the college...."[23]

Policy and administration seem to be interrelated in higher education to the point where these responsibilities cannot be sorted out; yet, much of the literature on the subject seems to require a distinction. Isn't it about time that higher education became more cognizant of arguments like those of Paul Appleby to the effect that administration is inseparable from the political process? Role conflicts will continue to occur, given the murky state of job definitions and functional differentiations in trustee-president relations, but greater recognition of the Appleby

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[22]Gies and Anderson, p. 2.

[23]King and Breuder, p. 53.

argument would result in an increased focus on the need for cooperation in attempting to resolve these conflicts. Yes, the policy-administration relationship needs to be examined, but this exploration must be carried out in a spirit of cooperation based on the question of how presidents and trustees can work jointly to fulfill their overlapping responsibilities. Writers of bylaws and other guidelines for college and university officials would be well advised to keep this perspective firmly in mind.

When the author began the research being reported here, it was hoped that specific subject matter differences between trustees on the one hand and presidents on the other could be isolated, and then this knowledge utilized within the framework of the policy-administration distinction to narrow the areas of discord. The survey results indicate, however, that existing patterns of agreement and disagreement are so varied and diverse that this hope was largely illusory. Attempts to formulate meansingful classifications or categories of action on the basis of institutional characteristics do show some result, but the author's interviews clearly demonstrate that even these trends and tendencies are materially overshadowed by personality and individual relationship factors.

Personal relations emerge in this survey as the most important aspect of the trustee-president relationship. The effort to assess the impact of the policy-administration distinction on trustee-president relations is eclipsed

in importance by the nature of the personal relationship between the board chairman and the president. A relation based on mutual trust, good faith, and a demonstrated ability to implement institutional objectives has quite a different impact from one characterized by formality and a minimum of meaningful communication. In the words of King and Breuder: "For trustees and presidents alike, the message is clear -- they must develop and maintain a relationship which draws upon each other's knowledge and expertise. There must prevail a sense of mutual integrity, confidence, and respect between both parties...."[24] Conclusions about the importance of the administration relationship must be set, therefore, in a framework that includes an assessment of the ability of the board chairman and the president to work together in a way that will maximize their capacity to achieve college or university goals.

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[24] Ibid., p. i.

APPENDIX
TRUSTEE-PRESIDENTIAL RELATIONS
SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Should the president of an institution of higher education approve a major change in the academic program as voted by the faculty without submitting it to the board for approval?

2. Should the president develop a long-range plan for an institution of higher learning without involving the board in the process of drafting the plan?

3. Should the president approve regulations on dormitory curfews, visiting hours, and visiting arrangements, as recommended by a student-faculty committee, without consultation with the board of trustees?

4. Should the president authorize the dispensing of birth control devices on campus without board approval?

5. In broad policy form, should the president rather than the board be the primary actor in choosing the major targets for budgetary reduction at a time of declining resources?

6. Should the board approve the appointment of a dean by the president when the faculty does not support this appointment?

7. Should the board establish its own committee on admissions without a specific recommendation from the president to do so?

8. Should the board close down an art exhibit that is severely criticized by a number of people in the community as pornographic when the president of the institution does not wish to take this action?

9. Should the board be involved in the various stages of the annual budget-making process before it is asked to give its final approval to the institution's budget?

10. Aside from the president's review and audit of the institution's budget, should the board conduct its own review and audit, with a particular focus on such matters as fund raising and capital financing?

11. Should the board engage the services of outside consultants to make recommendations on institutional direction without a recommendation to do so from the president?

12. Should the board develop a set of institutional goals without getting specific recommendations on these goals from the president of the institution?

13. Should the board decide to renovate a major campus building without a specific recommendation to do so from the president?

14. Should the board set limits on the number of tenured faculty without a specific recommendation from the president to do so?

15. Should the board eliminate an academic department in order to save money without a specific recommendation to do so from the president?

16. Should the board participate in collective bargaining meetings between the administration and officially recognized representatives of the faculty?